

## PANHANDLE WATER PLANNING GROUP

### Minutes

February 22, 2010

A meeting of the Panhandle Water Planning Group (PWPG) was held on Monday, February 22, 2010 at 1:30 p.m. in the PRPC Board Room, 415 West Eighth Avenue, Amarillo, Potter County, Texas.

Mr. C.E. Williams, Chairman, presided.

#### MEMBERS PRESENT:

Nolan Clark, USDA-ARS; David Landis, City of Perryton; John Sweeten, Texas AgriLife Research Station – TAMU Ag. Res & Ext; Steve Walthour, North Plains Groundwater Conservation District; Cole Camp, Pika International Inc.; Ray Brady alt. for Vernon Cook, County of Roberts; Charles Cooke, TCW Supply, Inc.; Kendall Harris, Mesquite Groundwater Conservation District; Bill Hallerburg; Rusty Gilmore, Rita Blanca Well Service; Tom Bailiff, Greenbelt Municipal & Industrial Water Authority; Steve Miller alt. for Emmett Autrey, City of Amarillo; Jim Derrington, Palo Duro River Authority; Gale Henslee, Xcel Energy; Ben Weinheimer, Texas Cattle Feeders Association; C.E. Williams, Panhandle Ground Water Conservation District; John Williams, CRMWA; Victoria Sabia, Texas Water Development Board; Simone Kiel, Freese & Nichols; Van Kelly, Intera; Kent Satterwhite, CRMWA; Steve Jones, TDA; Cleon Nameken alt. for Mickey Black, USDA; Charles Munger, TWPD;

#### MEMBERS ABSENT:

Janet Guthrie, Hemphill County UWCD; Grady Skaggs, County of Oldham; Joe Baumgardner; Janet Tregellas; Denise Jett ConocoPhillips;

#### OTHERS PRESENT:

Cindy Cockerham, Sen. Seliger; Steve Stevens, Mesa Water; Alan Abraham, LWV; Marty Jones, Sprouse Law Firm; Joyce Hinsley, Amarillo LWV; one attendant whose name was illegible.

#### STAFF PRESENT:

Kyle Ingham, Local Government Services Director; Jonathan Ellis, Local Government Services Program Specialist

#### 1. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. C. E. Williams called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. and took roll call.

2. **ESTABLISH ATTENDANCE & RECOGNIZE DESIGNATED ALTERNATES**

In the opinion of the Chair, there being a quorum present it was suggested that the group dispense with roll call pending a challenge. Recognized Alternates included: Ray Brady for Judge Vernon Cook, and Steve Miller for Emmett Autrey.

3. **CONSIDER – THE MINUTES FROM THE REGULAR MEETING HELD JANUARY 19, 2010**

Kyle Ingham, made comment on a change which had taken place under Item 7 of that meeting, clarifying a position by Van Kelly. He suggested this be included in the amended minutes. Bill Hallerberg made a motion to accept the minutes as amended. Dr. Nolan Clark seconded; motion carried by unanimous vote.

4. **DISCUSS – SUBMISSION OF ECONOMIC IMPACT REQUEST TO THE TEXAS WATER DEVELOPMENT BOARD**

Mr. Ingham, presented documentation requesting the assistance of the TWDB regarding the socio-economic impact analysis of not meeting water needs. Mr. Ingham indicated that he had received notice this day confirming receipt of the request. Mr. Ingham indicated that as soon as all information had been gathered it would be submitted to TWDB for that analysis and then that analysis could be entered into the final Plan.

5. **DISCUSS AND ACTION AS APPROPRIATE – CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF THE INITIALLY PREPARED PLAN (IPP) – 2011 PANHANDEL REGIONAL WATER PLAN**

Simone Kiel from Freese and Nichols presented on the Initially Prepared Plan (IPP). Ms. Kiel spoke to the process by which draft chapters had been preliminarily completed and dispersed to members for review. Ms. Kiel for review presented a brief summary on what was contained in each draft chapter, and some of the methodology specific to the formulation of each chapter. Further, Ms. Kiel spoke about changes which had been made specific to each chapter, after discussion and consensus by the PWPG. Ms. Kiel presented several comments and concerns which had been submitted to her by PWPG Members and what steps had been taken to rectify those concerns. After this summary was completed Ms. Kiel began a chapter-by-chapter comprehensive review of the IPP. Before this was begun however, Ms. Kiel indicated that there were currently two chapters not included in the IPP. One of these being chapter 9, the infrastructure financing report which would be completed after submission of the IPP by the TWDB and PRPC. The other being chapter 10, the adoption of the plan, which would document the proceedings, decisions, and contributions of the PWPG, posting information, public comments, and responses to public comments. Finally Ms. Kiel, spoke briefly on the appendices, including their structure, scope, and the information they each contained. These appendices included: Database Tables, County Summaries, Ag Demand report, GAM results, Summary of the Recharge Study, Northern Ogallala GAM Update, the Lake Meredith Study, Cost Estimates, Model Conservation and Drought Contingency Plans. Ms. Kiel proceeded with her chapter-by-chapter analysis.

Chapter 1: Description of the Region, included information on water sources in the region, other natural resources, economic indicators, information on various types of water users, and information on the wholesale water providers in the region. Further Chapter 1 provided a description of the counties which comprised the Region as well

as the Groundwater Management Areas and Groundwater Conservation Districts which comprised the region. Ms. Kiel said the primary effort in this chapter was on updating information from the 2006 plan.

Chapter 2: Population and Water Demands, included demand by water user group and broke down water use per industry in the region. Further the chapter spoke to changes in demand from the 2006 plan. There was no change to populations due to there not having been a census in between the last plan and this one. Finally the chapter spoke to irrigation demand by county.

Chapter 3: Water Supplies, included information on supply by sources divided into both major and minor aquifers in the region as well as surface water; supply available to WUGs/WWP; comparisons of current supply to demand; an update to the northern Ogallala GAM; and the Lake Meredith Study. In essence the first part of the chapter spoke to availability in terms of supply—both by source and county; the second part of the chapter spoke to availability to users. The latter half spoke to restraints, water rights permits, water contract amounts, and physical constraints. Ms. Kiel wished to emphasize then that supply in this chapter could mean two different things, one being the subject of the first half and the other being the subject of the second half. Ms. Kiel elaborated on the update to the northern Ogallala GAM which included an update to red bed data and updated historical pumpage. Further, Ms. Kiel spoke to an improvement to the 2004 model. The result of several of the updates was a change in availability—related to red bed data and changes associated with aquifer designation. Ms. Kiel stated that the GMA proposed desired future conditions were utilized for the Ogallala and that for the Dockum and Blaine aquifer a 1.25% decline was utilized since no other direction had yet come from the GMA regarding them. Ms. Kiel spoke to specific counties in the Northwest of the region which had projected shortages. There was discussion between members for clarification of what some indicators meant and what the scope of some indicators were. There was discussion between members and it was decided that another map should be added which showed water available for development but not currently available for production on a county by county basis. Ms. Kiel said that it would be possible to add this map to address several members' concern.

Chapter 4: Water Management Strategies, Ms. Kiel detailed some strategies which were implemented since the update to the northern Ogallala GAM. Ms. Kiel spoke to where some strategies remained the same since the last plan. There was extensive discussion for clarification between Ms. Kiel, Mr. Walthour, and Mr. John Williams on the scope and capabilities inherent in the water management strategies, this discussion also turned to total supply and allocated supply by source. Essentially water management strategies fell within four categories: 1) Conservation, 2) Irrigation Conservation, 3) Development of new groundwater, and 4) Increased purchasing from providers. Regarding the first strategy, Ms. Kiel spoke briefly on conservation strategies currently in place and proposed divided for both cities and counties. The category of irrigation conservation was divided into two tiers. Tier 1 strategies include: biotechnology adoption of drought resistant crops; NPET to schedule irrigation; irrigation equipment efficiency improvements; and conservation tillage methods. Tier 2 strategies include: changes in crop variety; changes in crop type; and converting irrigated acreage to dry land farming. Regarding the strategies of development of new groundwater and increased purchasing from whole-sale providers, Ms. Kiel spoke to individualized options for those with shortages in this regard. Further, alternate

strategies were offered in the plan as alternate strategies such as precipitation enhancement and a Palo Duro Transmission System. Ms. Kiel did speak to some individual strategies tailored to unique situations. The strategies were developed per county and cost estimates for implementation are included in the appendices. Mr. Ingham suggested that in the sections about drilling new wells that the Group should add a line about the increase of infrastructure to support this action. Steve Miller on behalf of Emmett Autrey of the City of Amarillo asked Ms. Kiel about the inclusion of the line extension brought up at the January 19, 2010 meeting. After discussion between Ms. Kiel, Mr. Ingham, and Mr. C.E. Williams it was determined that the item was most likely covered in the previous plan and if it was not then its inclusion in the IPP would be sufficient for the purposes of current development of the line as opposed to requiring an amendment to the 2006 plan.

Chapter 5: Water Quality Parameters, Ms. Kiel spoke to several issues present in the Panhandle Region including: Salinity, Nitrate, and Nutrient issues. Ms. Kiel spoke to the fact that there are several studies and charts tracking the levels of these issues in various areas and demographics in the PWPA. Ms. Kiel and Mr. John Williams discussed the impact and source of possible mercury in the PWPA

Chapter 6: Summary of Conservation in PWPA, this section essentially consists of individual water conservation plans and drought contingency plans for WUGs in the PWPA. There is discussion of regional drought triggers. Besides updating some areas dependent upon data, Ms. Kiel noted that a large portion of this chapter is the same as what was in the 2006 Panhandle Regional Water Plan.

Chapter 7: Consistency of Rules, is a synopsis of the protection for state resources. Water Resources, Agricultural Resources, and Natural Resources were investigated. Ms. Kiel noted that Mr. John Williams had advised her that the section dealing with national monuments was not up to date currently in this chapter. Ms. Kiel said that that section would be made up to date.

Chapter 8: Legislative Recommendations, Ms. Kiel made note that no streams or reservoir sites are designated as unique in the PWPA. Legislative recommendations had been on whole developed by the legislative committee and adopted by the full PWPG. Mr. John Williams just wanted the PWPG to be conscious that the Sweetwater Creek Reservoir was not recognized as unique in the IPP.

There were several questions for clarification that several members had, each was addressed. There being none, Mr. C.E. Williams expressed willingness to entertain a motion to approve and adopt the IPP. Mr. Ingham offered that it would be appropriate for the motion to be in the vein of: "Approving as amended and presented and in consideration of all additional comments." Motion was made by Bill Hallerberg, seconded by John Williams. Motion passed by unanimous assent.

**6. DISCUSS AND ACTION AS APPROPRIATE – CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF THE INITIALLY PREPARED PLAN (IPP) – 2011 REGIONAL WATER PLAN.**

Mr. C.E. Williams invited Virgiina Sabia of the Texas Water Development Board to speak on this issue. Ms. Sabia stated that it was her understanding that the TWDB hoped that as soon as the IPP is available that it will become the new benchmark for whether something is considered "consistent with the regional water plan." Ms. Sabia indicated that TWDB is going to consider whatever is in the IPP to be the most up to date in determining consistency. This point was brought up in regards to the City of

Amarillo possibly seeking an amendment to the 2006 plan so that their extension of a water line may be assured as consistent with the regional water plan. Ms. Sabia felt that after TWDB's views on the purpose of an IPP that Amarillo would be covered. This is in regard for funding purposes. Steve Miller wished for the record to indicated that both at the last meeting and this one they have inquired into and expressed willingness to fulfill any requirement of the City of Amarillo in terms of ensuring consistency so as to allow their seeking of funds for a city line extension. Mr. C.E. Williams expressed that this was approved in the IPP which was approved last item. Mr. C.E. Williams did not know if there was anything else required. Mr. C.E. Williams expressed that it might be needed for TWDB to offer assurance that the actions taken thus far are all that will be needed. Ms. Sabia said that while this was her expectation, that TWDB did need to look at the finer points of the line extension project so that the finance engineers can compare the current projected project to stated reasons within the IPP. Questions were asked in regard to the placement of the project being in the Intended Use Plan for eligibility for WIFF funding. It was clarified that the application for funding had to get on the IUP for next year. After further discussion for clarification, Mr. Miller made a motion that Mr. Ingham send a letter requesting confirmation from TWDB on whether or not the project is in the existing plan. After further explanation, David Landis seconded with the amendment that whatever the case turned out to be the City of Amarillo would dedicate itself to providing any necessary documentation to move the process forward. Ms. Sabia made comment that a bulleted list included all necessary pieces which needed to be submitted. Motion passed by unanimous assent.

7. **DISCUSS – TEXAS WATER DEVELOPMENT BOARD DECISION FROM FEBRUARY 17, 2010 MEETING PERTAINING TO GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT AREA #1 DESIRED FUTURE CONDITIONS PETITION PROCESS.**

Mr. C.E. Williams reported that the TWDB hearing came out the way the GMA # 1 wanted. There was some discussion between members on what the reasoning behind the ruling was the consensus being that the stance of the TWDB being that there was no other recourse. It was stated that it was a 5-1 decision.

8. **DISCUSS AND ACTION AS APPROPRIATE – PUBLIC HEARING DATE AND LOCATION FOR INITIALLY PREPARED PLAN (IPP) – 2011 PANHANDLE REGIONAL WATER PLAN**

Mr. C.E. Williams put forward the 28<sup>th</sup> of April as a possible meeting date. There was discussion on what time of day. After discussion concluded, Cole Camp made a motion that the hearing be held April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2010 at 6:00 pm. Steve Walthour seconded, motion passed by unanimous assent.

Discussion turned to where this hearing might be held. The Texas AgriLife Extension and Research Center was put forward as a likely contender since it was held there last time.

Mr. Ingham asked Ms. Sabia about posting time frames and requirements for the hearing. Ms. Sabia made comment that it was a 30-day window prior to the hearing. Ms. Sabia noted that this posting had to be sent to everyone: Mayors, County Judges, water rights holders, county clerks, county libraries, newspapers, etc.

9. **REGIONAL REPORTS – REGION B AND REGION O**

Kent Satterwhite made known that region O had adopted an IPP the previous Thursday. Region B meets tomorrow.

10. **REPORT OR COMMENTS FROM TWDB PERSONNEL**

Virginia Sabia made comment that they are gearing up for the March 1<sup>st</sup> arrival of all the IPPs after which point the 120 day review process will be initiated. Members of TWDB staff are being relocated so access may be limited.

11. **OTHER BUSINESS, CLOSING COMMENT FROM CHAIRMAN AND BOARD MEMBERS**

Mr. Walthour mentioned that on the 10<sup>th</sup> of this month, TCEQ recommended that there be some additions to North Plains Groundwater Conservation District.

12. **ADJOURN**

There being no further business or comments, Mr. C.E. Williams adjourned the meeting at 3:44 p.m.